Lasianthus chlorocarpus K.Schum.

Family: Rubiaceae


Common name:
Blue Rubi

Stem
Usually flowers and fruits as a shrub 1-2 m tall.

Leaves
Young shoots, lower surface of the leaf blade and twigs clothed in pale brown +/- prostrate hairs. Leaf blades about 8-18 x 2-4 cm, lateral veins curving inside the blade margin but not forming definite loops. Petiole grooved or channelled on the upper surface. Stipules triangular, about 2-4 mm long, clothed in prostrate hairs.

Flowers
Inflorescence shorter than or approximating the length of the petioles. Calyx tube (hypanthium) about 2.5-3 mm long, calyx lobes about 0.5 mm long, outer surface hairy, inner surface glabrous. Corolla tube about 5 mm long, corolla lobes about 5 mm long, inflexed or hooked at the apex. Inner surface of the corolla lobes and the upper part of the corolla tube densely clothed in white hairs. Anthers about 1.5 mm long, filaments glabrous. Pollen white. Ovules attached near the base of the locules.

Fruit
Fruits ovoid, about 10-15 x 8-10 mm diam., metallic blue or black in colour, calyx lobes persistent at the apex. Seeds about four per fruit, about 4-6 x 2-3 mm, convex on one side and concave on the other. Endosperm very oily. Cotyledons about as wide as the radicle.

Seedlings
Cotyledons orbicular, about 7-8 mm diam. First pair of leaves opposite, margins "toothed" with a comparatively large hair at the apex of each tooth. At the tenth leaf stage: leaf blade narrowly elliptic, margin appears toothed because of the presence of a row of hairs. Stipules narrowly triangular, about 3 mm long, densely clothed in reddish long hairs. Seed germination time 99 to 116 days.

Distribution and Ecology
Occurs in CYP and NEQ. Altitudinal range from near sea level to 500 m. Grows as an understory plant in well developed undisturbed lowland rain forest. Also occurs in New Guinea.

Natural History & Notes
The numerous purple or blue fruits make this a desirable garden shrub though plants may be short lived.

Synonyms
Misapplied name: Lasianthus strigosus Wight, Calcutta Journal of Natural History 6: 512 (1846). Type: Ceylon.

RFK Code
3171